

El Camino Real de los Tejas

Personal Thoughts:

It is a bit overwhelming to realize that a simple migration route for animals became the first interstate highway for indigenous people, notable Texans of our past, and my ancestors. To fully appreciate the experience, I had to look past the segment that is on park land and connect it to Texas Highway 21 in both directions driving away from the parking lot. At Mission Tejas State Park, I picked up the hiking trail through the woods and found the deeply carved U-shaped formation that indicates the El Camino Real de los Tejas. Each park was a puzzle piece to be connected later with a bit of imagination, satellite imagery, and a map.

About This Lesson

General Citation

This lesson is based on the resources of Caddo Mounds State Historic Site (also known as the George C. Davis site), Texas Historical Commission, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Stephen F. Austin State University, the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association, National Park Service, and National Archives. It was written by Kathy Lathen, a Texas educator with over a decade of classroom instructional experience.

Where it fits into the curriculum

Topics and Time Period: This lesson's focus is to analyze the political, economic, geographic, and social (PEGS) connections to the El Camino Real de los Tejas potentially across multiple eras of Texas history beginning with Natural Texas and Its People (Prehistory-1528) through to Spanish Colonial (1690-1821).

TEKS Standards

Seventh Grade Social Studies

Students will be able to:

- 7.2(A) compare the cultures of American Indians in Texas prior to European colonization such as Gulf, Plains, Puebloan, and Southeastern;
- 7.2(B) identify important individuals, events, and issues related to European exploration of Texas, such as Alonso Alvarez de Pineda, Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca and his writings, the search for gold, and the conflicting territorial claims between France and Spain;
- 7.2(C) identify important events and issues related to European colonization of Texas, including the establishment of Catholic missions, towns and ranches; and individuals such as Fray Damian Massanet, Jose de Escandon, Antonio Margil de Jesus, and Francisco Hidalgo;
- 7.2(F) contrast Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo purposes for and methods of settlement in Texas.
- 7.8(A) create and interpret thematic maps, graphs, charts, models, and databases representing various aspects of Texas during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries;
- 7.8(B) analyze and interpret geographic distributions and patterns in Texas during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries;

- 7.9(B) compare places and regions of Texas in terms of physical and human characteristics;
- 7.9(C) analyze the effects of physical and human factors such as climate, weather, landforms, irrigation, transportation, and communication on major events in Texas;
- 7.10(A) identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment and analyze the positive and negative consequences of the modifications;
- 7.12(B) trace the development of major industries that contributed to the urbanization of Texas such as transportation, oil and gas, and manufacturing;
- 7.19(C) identify examples of Spanish influence and the influence of other cultures on Texas such as place names, vocabulary, religion, architecture, food, and the arts;
- 7.20(A) compare types and uses of technology, past and present;
- 7.21(A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about Texas;
- 7.21(B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;
- 7.21(C) organize and interpret information in outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps;
- 7.21(H) use appropriate mathematical skills to interpret social studies information such as maps and graphs;
- 7.22(A) use social studies terminology correctly;
- 7.22(C) transfer information from one medium to another, including written to visual and statistical to written or visual, using computer software as appropriate;
- 7.22(D) create written, oral, and visual presentation of social studies information.

National Council for the Social Studies

I. Culture

Students will be able to:

- a. explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns;
- d. compare ways in which people from different cultures think about and deal with their physical environment and social conditions.

II. Time, Continuity, and Change

Students will be able to:

- a. demonstrate an understanding that different people may describe the same event or situation in diverse ways, citing reasons for the differences in views;

- b. demonstrate an ability to use correctly vocabulary associated with time such as past, present, future, and long ago; read and construct simple timelines; identify examples of change; recognize examples of cause and effect relationships;
- c. compare and contrast different stories or accounts about past events, people, places, or situations, identifying how they contribute to our understanding of the past;
- d. identify and use various sources for reconstructing the past, such as documents, letters, diaries, maps, textbooks, photos, and others.
- e. demonstrate an understanding that people in different times and places view the world differently.

III. People, Places, and Environments

Students will be able to:

- a. construct and use mental maps of locales, regions, and the world that demonstrate understanding of relative location, direction, size, and shape;
- b. interpret, use, and distinguish various representations of the earth, such as maps, globes, and photographs;
- c. use appropriate resources, data sources, and geographic tools such as atlases, data bases, grid systems, charts, graphs, and maps to generate, manipulate, and interpret information;
- d. estimate distance and calculate scale;
- h. examine the interaction of human beings and their physical environment, the use of land, building of cities, and ecosystem changes in selected locales and regions;
- i. explore ways that the earth's physical features have changed over time in the local region and beyond and how these changes may be connected to one another;
- j. observe and speculate about social and economic effects of environmental changes and crises resulting from phenomena such as floods, storms, and drought.

IV. Individual Development and Identity

Students will be able to:

- b. describe personal connections to place—especially place as associated with immediate surroundings;
- h. work independently and cooperatively to accomplish goals.

V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Students will be able to:

- f. give examples of the role of institutions in the furthering both community and change;
- g. show how groups and institutions work to meet individual needs and promote the common good, and identify examples of where they fail to do so.

VI. Power, Authority and Governance

Students will be able to:

- g. explore the role of technology in communications, transportation, information-processing, weapons development, or other areas as it contributes to or helps resolve conflicts.

VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption

Students will be able to:

- a. give examples that show how scarcity and choice govern our economic decisions;
- f. describe the influence of incentives, values, traditions, and habits on economic decisions;
- i. use economic concepts such as supply, demand, and price to help explain events in the community and nation.

VIII. Science, Technology, and Society

Students will be able to:

- a. identify and describe examples in which science and technology have changed the lives of people, such as homemaking, childcare, work, transportation, and communication;
- b. identify and describe examples in which science and technology have led to changes in the physical environment, such as the building of dams and levees, offshore oil drilling, medicine from rain forests, and loss of rain forests due to extraction of resources or alternative uses.

IX. Global Connections

Students will be able to:

- b. give examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups, and nations.

Objectives for Students

- 1) To assess the political, economic, geographic, and social (PEGS) connections to the El Camino Real de los Tejas within a specific historical time period, or range of eras in Texas history.
- 2) To compare and contrast the methods of transport and purposes for using the El Camino Real de los Tejas within a specific historical time period, or range of eras in Texas history.
- 3) To analyze maps featuring Caddo Mounds State Historic Site and other significant travel destinations along the El Camino Real de los Tejas visualizing its use as an early interstate highway.

Materials for students

The materials listed below can be used either directly on the computer or can be printed out, photocopied, and distributed to students:

- 1) PEGS graphic organizer, document analysis worksheets, map of Texas including neighboring states;
- 2) Maps of Texas dating back to European exploration of the Mississippi River watershed and Texas;
- 3) Documents mentioning the El Camino Real de los Tejas, Texas Highway 21, King's Highway, Old San Antonio Road, etc.

Getting Started

Photograph 1



Inquiry Question

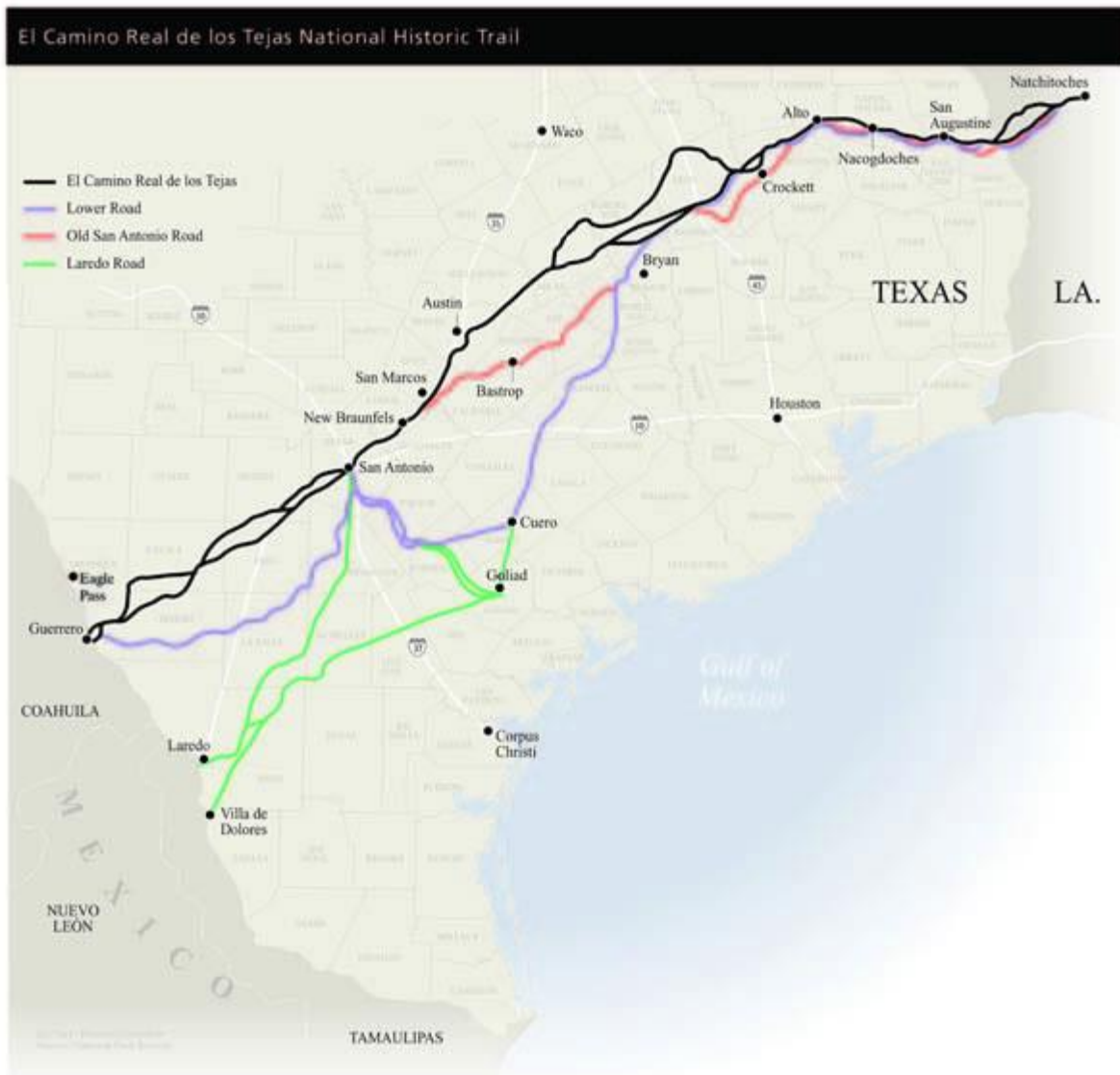
Using the Photograph Analysis Worksheet from the National Archives, students will observe, infer, and question the above photograph.

Setting the Stage

The Caddo who inhabited Caddo Mounds State Historic Site from 1000 AD to 1600 AD utilized a series of connected trails to trade with other bands of tribes in the Upper Midwest as far south as Central America. This system of trails across different physical regions began as a series of migratory animal paths. Paleo Indians would reap the benefits of following the migratory animals as sources of food, furs, and bone for primitive tools. Over time, hunter-gather communities would make contact with agrarian villages and establish trading and cultural centers for goods such as furs, minerals, pottery, seeds, nuts, fruits, vegetables, dried meats, and shellfish. With the Age of Discovery, Europeans began to explore the Western Hemisphere in hopes of finding a more direct trade route to Asian markets. Europeans would bring new domesticated livestock to the continent. Europeans travelling by small watercraft, foot, and utilizing horses would traverse far inland from the coastline of the Gulf of Mexico. Europeans made contact with the indigenous people of the Americas often with deadly consequences. However, a positive discovery would be that system of trails across a wide area of unknown terrain to Europeans. The Spanish would benefit the most from this trail system by establishing missions near the established trading and cultural centers along a trail appropriately named The King's Road. Trade across Spanish missions, European settlements within the continent, and across the Gulf of Mexico to Europe supported the growth of this transportation route. The road would relocate, split, and merge as a result of floods or to avoid hostile Indians. The Spanish mission system would fade into history, but the road remained often with new names and additional destinations. Adventurous Americans looking for a fresh start travelled upon the road to seek new fortune in a place called Texas. The El Camino Real de los Tejas was the first interstate highway in Texas connecting Los Adaes near present-day Robeline, Louisiana to near San Juan Bautista mission and presidio at today's Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico.

Locating the Site

Map 1: El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail



Courtesy of the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association

Questions for Map 1

- 1) List 3 observations about the map that are important, and explain each.
- 2) Using your knowledge of Texas history, what inferences can be made to explain the need for 4 roads?
- 3) Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast Map 1 to Map 2.

Locating the Site

Map 2: Caddo Trade Networks



(This map demonstrates the significant location of the Caddo in facilitating trade throughout the United States. Courtesy of the Texas Historical Commission)

Questions for Map 2

- 1) Using your knowledge of Texas history and the map above, what physical region in Texas has the most trade activity? List additional resources of the region that could be traded in addition to the commodities mentioned on the map.
- 2) What connections can be made between the trade network and rivers?

Determining the Facts

Reading 1: “TEXAS UNDER SPANISH COLONIAL RULE, 1680–1821”

The earliest trails and roads in Texas were animal paths leading through forests and across prairies and dry lands to springs, streams, and rivers, following routes with the fewest obstacles. Native Americans expanded such routes to incorporate seasonal camp sites, hunting areas, and villages. Prior to and following 1700, Spanish explorers and settlers traveled some of these existing trails, widening them as they moved on horseback with pack trains and soldiers. Spanish-era roads were created through use and brush and tree removal. Among the many journeys were those led by Antonio de Otermín, Alonso de León, Domingo Terán de los Ríos, the Espinosa–Olivares–Aguirre group, Pedro Vial, and José Mares. Portions of routes taken by these entradas appear to follow general alignments, or are within a few miles of, sections of the historic Texas roads examined in this study.

Spain’s presence in Texas was limited by the size of the territory and its distance from settled areas of Mexico, the absence of economic incentives (significant quantities of gold and other minerals), and the successful defensive efforts of its native peoples. The quest to maintain its empire and to defend against French incursions drove Spain to continue its colonization of Texas. Although such efforts yielded little in expected or hoped for material wealth, Spanish colonists nonetheless created a network of primitive roads linking far-flung missions, presidios, and a few settlements with each other and Mexico. Many of the first missions, like those built in East Texas in 1690 and 1691, were on El Camino Real de los Tejas – the royal road connecting East Texas with Mexico City. After 1700, expanding settlement forged an increasingly complex system of local and regional roads among ranchos, missions, presidios, settlements, and river crossings. Some routes, such as El Camino Real and the roads from the Rio Grande near present-day Eagle Pass and Laredo to San Antonio, had multiple alignments known by several names and used different river crossings and intersections with other roads, depending on the seasons and water availability. Among the more significant roads of the Spanish Colonial era were El Camino Real de los Tejas, El Paso del Norte to Ysleta Road, the San Antonio–Laredo Road, La Bahía Road, and the Atascosito–Opelousas Road. Between 1700 and 1703, Spain created a supply station called San Juan Bautista, about 35 miles south of present-day Eagle Pass, to support reoccupation of Texas in defense of renewed French presence. San Antonio was founded in 1718, as was an associated mission and presidio, to function as a way station between San Juan Bautista and the East Texas missions. San Antonio quickly assumed significance as a major hub within the evolving road network. Between 1682 and 1793, Spain built 21 missions and seven presidios, and founded seven settlements: Ysleta, San Antonio, Goliad, Nuestra Señora de Dolores, Laredo, San Elizario, and Nacogdoches. In 1790, Texas was one of the least populated provinces of New Spain with fewer than two inhabitants per square league, and the settled areas had a total population of just 3,169 people. That changed with the steady expansion of the United States between 1790 and 1810, the transfer of Louisiana from Spain to France in 1800, the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, and the United States’ quest for more territory, all of which brought more Anglo-Americans into East Texas. They forged trails and built homesteads, trading posts, and buffalo camps along the Red River, and also moved across the Sabine River, establishing homesteads and small settlements along the lower Trinity

and San Jacinto rivers. These immigrants were the vanguard of an unstoppable migration that populated East Texas and created local and regional networks of primitive roads linking to the northeast–southwest El Camino Real and the east–west Atascosito–Opelousas Road. One of the earliest north–south roads in East Texas was Trammel’s Trace, an important route blazed about 1820 between Arkansas and Nacogdoches. At the end of the Spanish period, local and regional roads in Texas connected with routes into Louisiana, Arkansas, New Mexico, and northern Mexico.

Questions for Reading 1

1. After reading the selection, complete the PEGS graphic organizer.
2. Create a timeline of events for each year mentioned in the selection.
3. Research and write a brief biography of one of the following individuals or groups: Antonio de Otermín, Alonso de León, Domingo Terán de los Ríos, the Espinosa–Olivares–Aguirre group, Pedro Vial, and José Mares.

Reading 1 was sourced from the Texas Historical Commission’s report, “The Development of Highways in Texas: A Historic Context of the Bankhead Highway and Other Historic Named Highways,”

<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/public/upload/preserve/survey/highway/Section%20I.%20Statewide%20Historic%20Context.pdf>

Reading 2 “King’s Highway”

The Camino Real/King’s Highway stretched some 1,000 miles from Saltillo, Mexico to Louisiana. Utilizing Indian and buffalo trails, Domingo Teran de los Rios laid out the portion known as the “Trail of the Padres” in 1691, thereby joining Monclova, then capital of the province, to the Spanish missions of east Texas. The Texas Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution chose to support a resurvey and marking of the trail, providing substantial financial support. In 1915 the Texas legislature appropriated \$5,000 to survey and mark the route. V.N. Zivley was commissioned to make the survey. The road was verified and resurveyed based on extant Spanish land grants and other documents. In 1918, granite markers were placed every five miles along the Texas section of the road. Ultimately, the project cost the Society \$10,544.00, and the Texas government, \$8,000.00. The railroads contributed by transporting the granite monuments at one-half the standard portage rates.

The Zivley manuscript volume, containing 114 sheets is endorsed: “I certify that this trail has been marked by granite boulders, inspected & dedicated, March Second, 1920”, by Mrs. Lipscomb Norvell, State Chairman Old Trails Committee, Daughters of the American Revolution.

Reading 2 *continued*

Excerpt from V.N. Zivley's "Preface":

In East Texas, that is from the initial point to the crossing of the Colorado River at Bastrop, the King's Highway, while in many places has been abandoned and entirely obliterated, was very definitely located by the Field Notes of land surveys made in the early years of the last century. These surveys were either bounded on one side by the old road, or if they crossed it the course and distance from the nearest corner to said crossing was in most instances stated, so that the relocation of the road in that part of the State was only a question of time and labor. From Bastrop to San Antonio there was little to guide me except tradition and the remaining evidence of the road to be found on the ground. From San Antonio to the Rio Grande or vice versa from the Rio Grande to San Antonio, about the only guide I had was the afore mentioned Diary of Morfi, a very learned and observant Spanish Priest who traveled the King's Highway in December 1778 from Presidio Rio Grand to the old Missions at San Antonio, and to that old Padre, though I am a Protestant of the most ultra blue stocking type, I want to doff my hat, as the most accurate artist in words of a country traversed that I have ever met – in books. Every place he mentioned, every object of interest, I found just as described by him in that brief Diary. His only inaccuracy was in the distance stated between given points, invariably the distance given by him was greater than that given by the steel tape. But I picture him as a scholarly devout man of fragile physique and wearied as he was by the days travel "y muchas inflexiones inuteiles" how natural for him to overestimate distance.

Questions for Reading 2

- 1) What type of document was used as a reference for establishing the early markers in 1918? Include text evidence to support answer.
- 2) What were early names for the El Camino Real de los Tejas?
- 3) Who were the surveyors tasked to explore and take field notes from 1691-1918?

Reading 1 was sourced from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission website, <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/treasures/flagsandmaps/kings-hwy.html>

Visual Evidence

Video 1: “El Camino Real de los Tejas”



<http://www.sfasu.edu/stonefort/elcaminoreal/>

Questions for Video 1

- 1) Before watching the video, answer this question, what is a road?
- 2) While watching the video, students will complete the PEGS graphic organizer.
- 3) How many miles is the length of the El Camino Real de los Tejas?
- 4) What methods of transport were included in the video?

Video 2: "SFASU A Brief History of the El Camino Real"

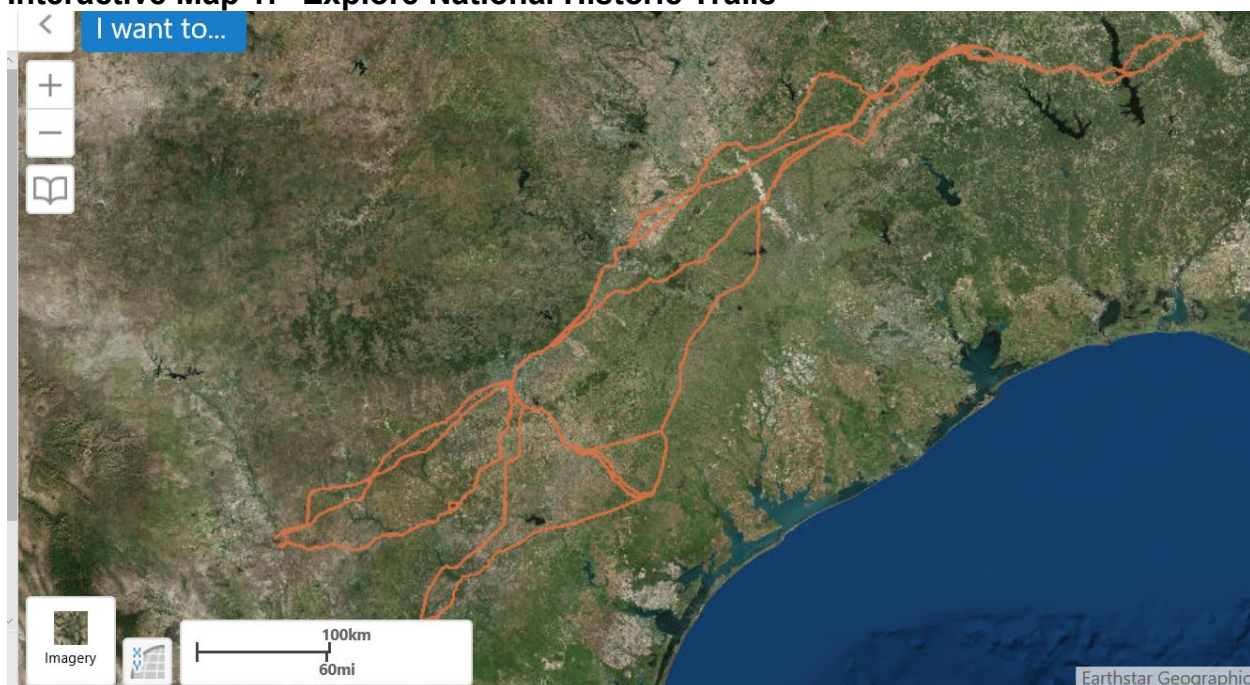


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9z2rCd9TeWk>

Questions for Video 2

- 1) While watching the video, students will complete the PEGS graphic organizer.
- 2) What symbol is used to designate the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail?
- 3) What major industry of eastern Texas is featured in the video?

Interactive Map 1: “Explore National Historic Trails”



<http://imgis.nps.gov/HTML/index.html?configBase=/Geocortex/Essentials/REST/sites/NHT/viewers/NHT/virtualdirectory/Resources/Config/Default&layerTheme=2&extent=-11249232.8769509,3101993.37907692,-10398637.1002386,3818284.5594663,102100>

Questions for Interactive Map 1

- 1) Using the topographic layer, locate the Neches River and Alto, Texas. How many variations of the El Camino Real de los Tejas are found between these two points on the map?
- 2) Find Caddo Mounds SHS on the topographic layer and toggle between the other base maps available. Record a minimum of 3 observations from each layer on a table.

Observations

	National Park Service	Open Street Map	Topographic	Imagery
Caddo Mounds State Historic Site				

- 3) Locate Robeline, Louisiana (Los Adaes) and calculate the distance from Los Adaes to Caddo Mounds SHS using the scale on the interactive map and following the El Camino Real de los Tejas.

Interactive Map 2: “The El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Photograph Gallery”



<http://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/talbotcaminoreal/>

Questions for Interactive Map 2

- 1) Using the Photographic Analysis Worksheet for each picture, analyze the four photographs from Alto, Texas to Weches, Texas.
- 2) Several photographs along the El Camino Real de los Tejas feature swales. What is a swale?
- 3) Using a Venn diagram, compare “25 Swale, Mission Tejas State Park, Houston County, Texas” to Photograph 1.

Putting it all Together

Pre-Site Visit Activities

Activity 1: Personal Narrative

Look at the picture below.



Oftentimes we are reminded that a walk in the woods isn't a lonely one.

Write a personal narrative about a time when you were travelling along a path and realized that you were not alone. Be sure to write about your experience in detail and describe why it was memorable.

Activity 2: Secret Door Foldable

Students go through their completed responses to questions and graphic organizers, and select the most important information to summarize on their foldable. The foldable will have a title page on the front of the foldable. Next, on the immediate inside, students will write summaries and draw pictures representing the most important information collected. Finally, the hidden picture will be a student drawn map of the El Camino Real de los Tejas.

Activity 3: Jeopardy Game

Students go through their completed responses to questions and graphic organizers, and create questions for Jeopardy. The suggested categories to include: Political, Economic, Geographic, Social, Eras, People, and Places. This game will be an excellent review to incorporate with any assessment.

Post-Site Visit Activities

Activity 1: Expository Essay

“A society that chooses between capitalism and socialism does not choose between two social systems; it chooses between social cooperation and the disintegration of society.”

READ the following quotation.

THINK carefully about the following statement.

Interactions with others promotes society and leads to prosperity.

WRITE an essay explaining whether it is better for a society to remain isolated and subsist only on what the natural environment can provide or to establish trade with neighboring societies.

Be sure to –

- clearly state your controlling idea
- organize and develop your explanation effectively
- choose your words carefully
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

Activity 2: Create a Story

Students will create an imaginative piece of historical fiction featuring the El Camino Real de los Tejas and Caddo Mounds State Historic Site during the Spanish Colonial Period. Historical figures of the era such as Father Antonio Margil de Jesus, Francisco Hidalgo, or St. Denis should be incorporated into the story by utilizing the student's experiences at the park and knowledge of social studies.

Activity 3: Visualize the Story

Students will take their writings and add pictures to illustrate their paper in a presentation or poster.

Supplementary Resources

Web Links

- 1) Analysis worksheets from the National Archives
<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/>
- 2) PEGS (Political, Economic, Geographic, Social) Graphic Organizer
http://curriculum.austinisd.org/soc_stud/resources/strategies.html
- 3) Texas Historical Commission, "Historic Resources of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail"
http://www.thc.state.tx.us/public/upload/preserve/national_register/draft_nominations/TX%20and%20LA,%20Camino%20Real%20de%20los%20Tejas%20MPDF.pdf
- 4) Texas State Library and Archives Commissions, "From Pioneer Paths to Superhighways" <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/exhibits/highways/index.html>
- 5) Texas Archeology in the Classroom: A Unit for Teachers
<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/archeology/archeology-publications-resources>
- 6) Perry Castaneda Map Collection, University of Texas
<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/texas.html#e>
- 7) Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas
http://www.cah.utexas.edu/research/reference_tools.php
- 8) Curriculum Guide for Teaching Texas History, San Jacinto Museum of History
<http://www.sanjacinto-museum.org/content/documents/CurriculumGuideforTeachingTexasHistory.pdf>
- 9) Animal Tracks identification
<https://nysparksnaturetimes.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/key-to-animal-tracks.png>